



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
ALTADENA SENIOR CENTER
560 EAST MARIPOSA STREET
ALTADENA, CALIFORNIA 91001
<http://lachildrenscommission.org>**

Monday, September 9, 2013

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING.

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Present: Chair Geneva Berger, Vice Chair Helen Kleinberg, Vice Chair Susan F. Friedman, Commissioner Carol O. Biondi, Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Dr. Sunny Kang, Commissioner Sydney Kamlager, Commissioner Becky A. Shevlin, Commissioner Adelina Sorkin LCSW/ACSW, Commissioner Martha Trevino-Powell and Commissioner Steven M. Olivas Esq.

Excused: Commissioner Daphne Ng

Call to Order. (13-4165)

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks for the meeting of September 9, 2013 by Geneva Berger, Chair.

- Los Angeles County Code of Ordinance, Title 3, Chapter 3.68 Commission for Children and Families (13-4172)

Chair Berger welcomed everyone; thanked Commission staff for a job well done in coordinating the meeting and providing support to the Commission; and thanked Sylvia Drew Ivie, Commission Executive Liaison for her hard work in supporting the Commission over the past year.

Chair Berger distributed a copy of Los Angeles County Code, Title 3, Chapter 3.68 Commission for Children and Families (Commission Ordinance), and expressed the importance for Commissioners to review Section 3.68.110 Ongoing duties, periodically. Chair Berger explained

that the Commission at one time had a very active Legislative Committee and announced that the Commission will be reestablishing this work in the form of either a Workgroup or Committee with Commissioner Olivas as Chair. The gamut of work will include legislation on the city, county, state and federal levels related to children and family issues.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

2. Brief History of the Commission for Children and Families.

- Helen Kleinberg, Vice Chair (13-4168)

Vice Chair Kleinberg provided a brief history of the Commission, extending from the creation of the Commission, work over the years, lessons learned, and the current child welfare environment. The Commission has remained resilient and child focused over the years.

Commissioner Curry explained the difference between the Commission for Children and Families (Commission) and the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRC) based on the establishing Board Motion stipulating that BRC will sunset after one year.

Commissioner Curry illustrated these differences with a side by side comparison of the short and long term requirements of both Commissions.

Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection

1. Short-Term Commission

2. BRC Reviews:

- Child Protection Failures including DCFS policies and cases.
- Previous delayed or failed efforts to implement reform
- Structure and organizational barriers

3. BRC Charge:

BRC is charged with providing recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (Board) for a feasible plan of action for needed reforms.

Commission for Children and Families

1. Long-Term Commission

The Commission is approaching its 30th anniversary of establishment in 2014.

2. Commission Reviews:

- All programs administered by County departments for all children at risk.
- Input received from community groups and individuals

3. Commission Charge:

- To make recommendations to the Board and Department Heads to improve services for children
- To make recommendations to the Board regarding legislation
- To provide an Annual Report to the Board

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, this item was received and filed.

3. Explanation of the Family, Community, and a County Continuum of Care (FC4) as the Commission's guiding principle.

- Patricia Curry, Commissioner (13-4247)

Vice Chair Kleinberg provided a brief background of Family+Community+County Continuum of Care (FC4) and explained that the structure of FC4 should be considered when discussing Agenda Item 4.

Commissioner Curry presented the following:

In 2005, in an effort to promote understanding of an integrated service delivery system that improves outcomes for children and families who have contact with County departments, FC4 was created.

The circular system of FC4 allows the child or family to enter the system at any point and be supported with the following services with the goal of reaching self-sufficiency, safety, and permanency.

- Primary Prevention Support Services
- Secondary Prevention Support Services (Voluntary)
- Tertiary Prevention Support Services (Crisis Mandatory)
- Aftercare Support Services

The array of services are both County and Community based and may be informal or formal services.

The four principles that were developed to base the service delivery system include:

1. Family Focused – Strength Based
2. Community Based Service Delivery
3. Coordinated and Integrated Service Support System
4. Performance Based Outcomes and Evaluation

Next Steps in achieving FC4 are with prevention, integration of services and implementation. In addition to achieving success in the key outcome areas, prevention services for children and families and integration of County programs needs to be a high priority. A County structure must be in place to hold the County departments accountable. To achieve integration, development of a countywide implementation plan starting with prevention is necessary.

The FC4 philosophy should be a driving factor for the work of the Commission's committees, its meetings' agendas, recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, and legislation the Commission supports.

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, this item was received and filed.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

The Commission recessed at 11:46 a.m. to discuss the Commission's work and consideration of future opportunities in designated workgroups outlined under Agenda Item 4.

The Commission reconvened at 1:21 p.m.

II. DISCUSSIONS

4. Discussion of the Commission's work and consideration of opportunities in the following areas:
 - Public, Private Agency Coalition:
 - Susan Friedman, Vice Chair
 - Carol Biondi, Commissioner
 - Sydney Kamlager, Commissioner
 - Steven Olivas, Commissioner
 - Sylvia Drew Ivie, Commission Executive Liaison

- **Community Involvement:**
 - Patricia Curry, Commissioner
 - Sunny Kang, Commissioner
 - Ann Franzen, Commissioner
 - Adelina Sorkin, Commissioner
 - Becky Shevlin, Commissioner
- **Continuum of Care:**
 - Gene Berger, Chair
 - Helen Kleinberg, Vice Chair
 - Candace Cooper, Commissioner
 - Martha Trevino Powell, Commissioner (13-4181)

Continuum of Care

Chair Berger explained that the principles of FC4 were incorporated in the group's discussion on the Continuum of Care and reported the following:

The Best Practices for child welfare across public and private entities should be designed to meet FC4.

- **Family focus:**
Social Workers need to engage family by demonstrating that they respect the family to make decisions and carry out actions.
- **Community Involvement:**
Community needs to be involved in the system of care; this includes schools, parks and recreation.
- **Prevention in the following areas:**
 - 1. Research on the Child Abuse Hotline**
 - 2. Referrals coming out of the Child Abuse Hotline**
 - 3. Prevention Resources – other Departments need to participate in continuum with specific programs**
- **Advisory bodies at schools and agencies should be connected to learn from each other. For example the Department of Parks and Recreation should connect with schools and community.**
 - **In order to improve the Continuum of Care, it is necessary to solicit input from the community on services needed and that are not currently being received.**
- **Improve the relationship between the Dependency Court and DCFS. Recommendations discussed include creating a Workgroup that covers**

issues relating to the Court system and DCFS and increasing awareness in the Courts on the continuation of services to children and the movement of the child throughout the system.

Public, Private Agency Coalition

Vice Chair Friedman reported the following recommendations to establish public/private agency coalitions:

- The Commission develop and propose a project on an area of child welfare that one of the child advocacy foundations may be interested in spearheading.
- The Commission select two or three issues to focus efforts on in the upcoming year. Some suggestions discussed included the following:
 - Increasing the number of qualified foster families:
The Commission should provide a recommendation on issues surrounding dual certification for foster parents. Potential foster parents are discouraged by the mandated process involved with qualifying to become a foster parent. This includes the misinterpretation that qualifying to become a foster parent requires a commitment to adopt.
- Notify organizations of the Commission's scheduled presentations that may be of interest to their organization.

Community Involvement

Commissioner Curry reported the following topics discussed in the group:

- Community Engagement

The group identified the following groups in the community that are involved in helping foster kids or working with the DCFS:

- Relatives
- California Youth Connection (CYC)
- Public Counsel
- Alliance for Children's Rights
- Faith-based Organizations

- Nonprofit youth clubs or organizations
 - Community Coordinating Council
- **Communication with the Community:**
There is a need for increasing awareness and educating organizations on the needs of foster kids. A recommendation is to develop a specific strategy on ways to educate and communicate with community organizations.
- **Unequal Community:**
The community is not equal; the gaps in community need to be identified. This includes identifying who is missing from discussions and ensuring that every stakeholder has a voice.
- **Faith-based Organizations:**
The DCFS Lakewood office has a Children's Social Worker (CSW) who works with the faith-based community and informs them of specific needs of foster children. A recommendation is to advocate for a position in each DCFS office that focuses on engaging and educating the community.
- **Primary and Secondary Prevention:**
In the area of primary and secondary prevention outlined in FC4, the Commission should advocate for the following:
 - First 5 LA, Best Start Program – First 5 LA has the ability to play a major role in early prevention. With First 5 LA's current Strategic Plan ranging from 2009 - 2015, the planning phase for the next Strategic Plan is approaching and may be the right time to advocate for early prevention.
 - 3-Year Mental Health Services Act Plan (MHSA) for 2014 - 2017
 - Innovation dollars available through MHSA funds.
Very little has been used for children and transitional age youth.
 - County development of an implementation plan for blending available funding streams.
- **Community Conference:**
The Commission work with DCFS on coordinating a Community Conference to educate and establish better communication with community organizations.

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, this item was received and filed.

III. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

5. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (13-4191)

There were none.

Closing Remarks

6. Closing Remarks for the meeting of September 9, 2013 by Geneva Berger, Chair. (13-4188)

Chair Berger closed with the following announcements:

- **The Commission's election for Chair and Vice Chair will be held on October 21, 2013.**
- **A motion to amend the Commission's Bylaws to set a 3-year term limit for Vice Chair is scheduled for the meeting of October 7, 2013.**

Commissioner Sorkin announced that DCFS Director Philip Browning, has convened a group of parents who were previously part of the foster care system, and meets with them regularly.

After discussion, by common consent and there being no objection, this item was received and filed.

Public Comment

7. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (13-4189)

There were none.

Adjournment

8. Adjournment of the meeting of September 9, 2013. (13-4190)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.